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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 19 dissertations deal with a variety of topics, including the following: the impact of Konstantin Stanislavski's ideas on motion picture acting in the United States and their significance for oral interpretation; the empathic ability of actors; the development of a secondary school oral interpretation course; the audition as a method actor selection; early children's theatre in the United States; the work environment of theatre department heads; the possible spatial configurations of live theatres; a comparision of the techniques of acting and Chamber Theatre in teaching literature; factors affecting oral interpreters' performance of specific literary works, audience comprehension, and audience evalution of performer effectiveness; the relationship of oral interpretation to its physical setting; the teaching of theatre arts in secondary schools; the teaching of creative movement to seventh graders; the use of improvisation in the teaching of English; and the development of "live" drama on television. (GW)

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ALBERT MCCLEERY'S TRANSFER OF THEATRE PRACTICE TO LIVE TELEVISION DRAMA

THE 'METHOD' FROM STANISLAVSKI TO HOLLYWOOD: THE TRANSITION OF ACTING THEORY IN AMERICA FROM STAGE TO SCREEN (1900–1976)

BLUM, Richard Arthur, Ph.D.
University of Southern California, 1977

Chairman: Professor Richard Toscan

This study was designed to provide insight into a neglected area of inquiry–the impact of Stanislavski on American motion picture acting. Prior to this work, the Stanislavski influence was considered the sole heritage of the stage. The history of 'Method' acting is traced from the New York stage of the twenties, to the Hollywood sound stage of the seventies.

The text identifies three major periods in the development and dissemination of Stanislavski's ideas: (1) the Period of Experimentation, 1900–1920, in which individual actors and directors sought different means of heightening the conveyance of truth to the audience; (2) the Period of Adoption and Modification, 1920–1950, in which the system was introduced to America, taught by individual actors and directors, and modified in approach by the Group Theatre; (3) the Period of Absorption, 1950–1976, in which the 'Method' became the most prominent acting style in realistic theatre and contemporary cinema.

The Period of Experimentation. At the turn of the century, Stanislavski experimented with the system in Moscow to counter pictorial display on the commercial stage. In America, a similar situation occurred, with Belasco-realism dominating the commercial stage, and physical exaggeration dominating the early silent film. In both stage and film, actors and directors experimented with more personal approaches to acting, eventually helping shift the aesthetic toward greater inner realism. D.W. Griffith sought more restraint in film, using techniques which paralleled the Stanislavski experiments. When sound appeared, the "new realism" in film acting was temporarily thrown into chaos but the potential for realizing fully dimensionalized roles on screen became apparent.

The Period of Adoption and Modification. America was introduced to a formative version of the system by Alla Nazimova, who became the first student of Stanislavski's to succeed on the American stage and to star in films. It was not until the Moscow Art Theatre tours (1923–1924), however, that the system generated interest and excitement among American actors. After the tours, Richard Boleslavski and Maria Ouspenskaya taught the system at the American Laboratory Theatre, providing a specific model for the founders of the Group Theatre of the thirties. Under Lee Strasberg's direction, the Group Theatre capitalized upon one aspect of Stanislavski training–inner technique. The modified emphasis was uniquely suited to the psychologically-themed plays and films of the period. Throughout the thirties and forties, Hollywood was greeted by a cross-over of talent from stage to screen, including first generation students of Stanislavski, e.g., Boleslavski and Ouspenskaya, and prominent members of the Group Theatre, e.g., Elia Kazan, who transferred the stage version of A Streetcar Named Desire (1947) directly to film (1951) using 'Method' techniques.

The Period of Absorption. Throughout the fifties and sixties, the Actors Studio dominated the mainstream of realistic acting, with Strasberg's 'Method' at the heart of controversy. The 'Method' capitalized upon inner technique and psychoanalytic exploration, utilizing Stanislavski's basic theory of achieving inner truth through motivated action. It has become the mainstay of realistic acting throughout the seventies. In motion pictures alone, better than one hundred Academy Award nominations were received by Actors Studio members from 1950 to 1976. That group, versed in the 'Method', included Marlon Brando, Dustin Hoffman, Paul Newman, Rod Steiger, Anne Bancroft, Joanne Woodward, Jane Fonda, Walter Matthau, Geraldine Page, Shelley Winters, and many others of equal calibre. In this sense, the motion picture actor of the late twentieth century has become a direct descendent of the Stanislavski heritage.

A STUDY OF THE SELECTED ETHNIC THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE INCORPORATED IN THE THEATRE PROGRAMS OF AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

CARPENTER, Dana, Ph.D.
Kansas State University, 1977

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which the selected ethnic theatrical experience was incorporated in the content and performing areas of the theatre programs of American colleges and universities. Specifically, this study dealt with the following: 1. The provisions made for the inclusion of the Black, Mexican American, and American Indian theatrical experiences in the theatre curriculum. 2. The extent to which the selected ethnic theatrical experience existed in schools of predominantly white, predominantly Black, and predominantly Mexican American student populations. 3. The nature of the research, plays, or articles, relative to the Black, Mexican American, and American Indian theatrical experiences, published by chairpersons and faculties of Speech and/or Theatre Departments. 4. The nature and extent of training chairpersons and faculties of Speech and/or Theatre Departments have had in the Black theatrical experience. 5. The recency of efforts to reflect the selected ethnic theatrical experience in departmental theatre productions. 6. The nature and degree of efforts made by American colleges and universities of predominantly ethnic student populations to perpetuate their respective ethnic theatre experience in the theatre curricula.

Procedure

Data for this study were obtained from questionnaires which were sent to the chairpersons of Speech and/or Theatre Departments in 235 four-year public and private American colleges and universities with student populations of 1,000 or more. Each institution of higher education offered at least a baccalaureate in speech and/or theatre in a Department of Speech and/or Theatre. The writer received 189 (80 percent) responses, with 181 (77 percent) of them being used in the analysis.

Findings and Conclusions

1. Colleges and universities made limited attempts to make provisions for the inclusion of the selected ethnic theatrical experience. 2. Chairpersons and faculties had not taken advantage of the mass body of knowledge about the selected ethnic theatrical experience. 3. The data indicated that there is a need for Black theatre to gain academic respectability in predominantly white institutions. 4. Higher educational institutions have made recent efforts to reflect the selected ethnic theatrical experience in departmental theatre productions. Eighty-six (57 percent) white institutions presented plays about the selected ethnic theatrical experience over a five year period. 5. Evidence of unbalanced theatre programs supported the conclusion that theatre curriculum developers have limited knowledge of ethnic theatre and the trends toward multicultural, multiethnic education. 6. Only Black institutions made the Black theatrical experience a high priority item in content and performance. Mexican American institutions had yet to prioritize Mexican American theatre.

Recommendations

1. All institutions should offer the selected ethnic theatrical experience either in a specific course or as a planned part of a regularly scheduled course such as modern drama, American drama, or theatre history. 2. All institutions should include a balance of theatre productions reflecting the selected ethnic theatre as well as non-ethnic theatre. 3. In order to implement the previous recommendation, chairpersons and faculties in most institutions should undertake programs of inservice or other education in order to develop background in the selected ethnic theatre. 4. Scholars in the area of theatre should undertake the selected ethnic theatrical experience as a subject of research and publication. 5. Educational theatre organizations should vigorously support the inclusion of the selected ethnic theatre content in the theatre curricula by making specific recommendations to American colleges and universities relative to the ethnic theatrical experience. 6. The need for further research in the selected ethnic theatre experience is evident. Order No. 77-26,027, 224 pages.

THE EFFECTS OF THE REGULAR USE OF CONTEXT RELATED AND INDEPENDENT DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES ON SELECTED COMPONENT SKILLS OF CRITICAL THINKING, ON STUDENT ATTITUDES AND ON THE QUALITY OF DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

CERCONE, Karen L., Ph.D.
University of Pittsburgh, 1977

In this study the researcher investigated the effects of the regular use of videotaped context related and independent dramatic activities on selected component skills of critical thinking, on student attitudes, and on the quality of dramatic performances in the English classroom. One class of tenth grade upper level academic English students engaged in one context related dramatic activity per week for twelve weeks and a similar class engaged in one parallel independent dramatic activity per week.

The critical thinking skills investigated were the abilities to make inferences, recognize unstated assumptions, reason deductively, interpret data, and evaluate arguments. Pre and post administrations of the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal were used to gather data about independent critical thinking ability in the selected critical thinking skills. Also, five teacher constructed tests of content-specific critical thinking ability were administered, one at the end of each of four literature units throughout the seventy day treatment period and one at the end of the treatment period on an unfamiliar short story. Two attitude surveys were administered at the end of the treatment period to gather data about student attitudes toward units studied in English class during the treatment period and about perceived benefits of engaging in dramatic activities. A dramatic performance evaluation for each treatment group was completed by three independent evaluators on one context related and one independent dramatic activity at the end of the treatment period. This procedure was used to gather data about the quality of dramatic performance in four student performance behaviors -- verbal expression, body and facial expression, concentration on the scene, and total effectiveness of the scene.

In the area of critical thinking both groups showed a significant change over time on four of the five component skill scores and the overall test score for the Watson-Glaser test instrument and the teacher made tests. Both groups earned significantly higher scores on teacher made tests on units studied than on the teacher made test on an unfamiliar short story. A lack of many significant correlations between the results on the Watson-Glaser instrument and the results on the teacher made tests suggests that a significant relationship does not exist between the results on the Watson-Glaser instrument and the results on the teacher made tests. The differences between the Context Group and the Independent Group performances on these measures were, in general, not significant.

In the area of student attitudes groups did not differ significantly in the degree of positive attitudes in the five categories on the "Student Attitude Survey for Units Studied" or in six of the seven categories on the "Dramatic Activity Student Attitude Survey." On the units studied survey, a trend evolved showing Context Group students perceiving curricular benefits more clearly. On the perceived benefits of dramatic activities survey, the Context Group students reported significantly more positive attitudes about the extent to which the activities helped develop appreciation and taste than did the Independent Group students.

In the area of quality of dramatic performances, the Context Group and the Independent Group did not differ significantly in the ability to produce a dramatic performance. The groups also did not differ significantly in quality of performance between the type of dramatic activity experience most familiar to the group and that least familiar to the group.

Order No. 77-23,554, 200 pages.

THE EMPATHIC ABILITY OF ACTORS: A BEHAVIORAL STUDY

COLLUM, Dovard Kelly, Ph.D.
The Florida State University, 1976

Major Professor: Gil Lazier

This study is predicated on the assumption that empathy is an important element in the theatrical experience. The actor's empathic ability was selected as the focus of this research. Descriptions of highly empathic persons, reported in psychological studies, indicate that these persons have personality traits that seem desirable in actors. It is also shown that regular intensive use of empathic attributes can cause an increase in empathic ability. This study asked whether actors have a higher empathic ability than the average non-actor and whether empathic abilities among actors increased with training and experience.

Data was gathered from 108 subjects. The subject groups consisted of beginning actors, pre-professional graduate students, professional actors, and a control group. The control group was randomly selected from the Green Bay, Wisconsin, metropolitan area. The first actor group consisted of students enrolled in freshman-sophomore college acting classes at three major universities. Actor group two subjects were students enrolled in pre-professional, Master of Fine Arts programs in acting at three major universities. The final group consisted of professional actors who are current active members of Actors' Equity.

The hypotheses tested were: (1) actors with the greatest amount of "experience in the theatre profession" will score higher on an empathy test than those with lesser experience, and (2) all actors will score higher on an empathy test than a randomly selected non-actor control group.

Two tests were administered to all subjects. The instruments selected were the Hogan Empathy Scale and The Chapin Social Insight Test. The data were analyzed by an analysis of variance and the Newman-Keuls procedure. The Hogan Empathy Scale data revealed that actors as a generic group score higher than the control beyond the .01 level of significance, but that actors do not increase empathy scores with training and experience. The Chapin Social Insight Test data showed no significance for either question. A correlation between the Hogan and Chapin tests reveals an r of -.12 indicating that the tests are not assessing the same things. Additional correlations for the professional actor group between the Hogan Empathy Scale and the professional variables of (1) years as a member of Actors' Equity and (2) years in which 100 percent of income was from acting yielded negative correlations significant at the .025 and .005 levels respectively. It was concluded that professional actors decrease in empathic ability as they practice their profession.

The study concluded that those persons drawn to the acting profession come with a higher empathic ability than the average person and that the ability does not increase with training and experience but indeed decreases among professionals.

Order No. 77-22,106, 88 pages.

THE RATIONALE, VALUES, AND COURSE GUIDE FOR A SENIOR HIGH ORAL INTERPRETATION COURSE

DAVIS, Michael Daniel, D.A.
Carnegie-Mellon University, 1977

The dissertation describes the development of an oral interpretation course for senior high students. First, the author defines oral interpretation from five points of view: (1) an academic discipline, (2) a specialized complex of speech and kinesic skills, (3) an approach to literary analysis, (4) a performing art, and (5) a continuation of the oral tradition. Then the author identifies the literary, pedagogical, and personal values inherent to oral interpretation. These two chapters form the rationale for the course. A course outline which identifies the objectives, activities, methods, materials, and evaluations for each unit is presented next. The fourth chapter contains the daily lesson plans and commentary for a sample unit on children's literature from the course. A process for developing oral interpretation programs and the Title III ESEA grant which enabled the author's students to perform such programs for community groups is described in the fifth chapter. A partial survey of the scholarly literature on oral interpretation that was examined during the preparation of the dissertation is presented in chapter six. The dissertation concludes with a bibliography of selected articles and books.

Order No. 77-19,190, 214 pages.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUDITION AS A METHOD OF SELECTING ACTORS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL LEGITIMATE THEATRE

DEZSERAN, Catherine Agnes Botten, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota, 1977

Some form of auditioning has been used in most nations and eras since the beginnings of theatrical activity. Until the twentieth century, however, employers seldom used the audition as their principal method of actor selection. These employers generally maintained relatively stable companies of performers and engaged actors only when vacancies occurred in these companies. In recruiting new troupe members, employers preferred to hire experienced performers whose professional capabilities were well-known to them. Consequently, they usually found the audition unnecessary as a device for actor selection.

The audition has become a fact of theatrical life in modern America for three principal reasons. First, the Actors' Equity Association compels employers to conduct auditions. Second, many modern employers do not maintain stable companies of actors; as a result, they must constantly find new actors for the ever-changing compositions of their companies. Third, the audition is the most efficient and economical method for employers of the numerous American theatrical companies to evaluate the abilities of the large numbers of actors available for employment.

Modern employers utilize six major forms of the audition--the interview, the open call, the reading audition, the general audition, the improvisatory audition, and the callback audition. The kind of audition which an employer decides to use to test a performer's suitability for an acting position is usually dependent upon the type of company the employer is casting as well as the kind of production or productions which the company will present.

Although employers and actors maintain varying attitudes towards the audition, most seem to accept the audition as a necessary part of their professions, because they believe that the audition is the most viable method of actor selection in the modern American theatre.

Although employers and actors generally accept the audition as a fact of theatrical life, they do not deny that the auditioning process requires improvements. These employers and actors normally attempt to cope with the deficiencies of the process through their own personal approaches to the auditions in which they participate.

The employer's principal preparatory concerns for auditions are to determine the type or types of auditions that he will use in casting actors as well as the criteria that he will employ in evaluating the suitability of a performer for an acting position. Three basic criteria normally guide a director in his choice of a performer for any position--first, the actor's physical, mental, and emotional qualifications; second, the applicant's technique; third, the individual's natural performing abilities.

Because the employer controls the basic framework of the auditioning situation, many of the actor's preparatory considerations are contingent upon the kind of audition that an employer decides to use. Of all forms of the audition, the general audition requires the actor to make the greatest number of specific preparatory decisions, because in this mode of the audition the actor maintains the greatest amount of control over what and how he will perform during an audition.

Agents and national theatrical organizations also recognize deficiencies in the contemporary American auditioning process. They attempt to assist employers and actors in accomplishing improvements in the process primarily through their efforts to establish economical, organized, and efficient auditioning procedures. In promoting efficiency in the auditioning process, however, these agents and organizations sometimes encourage the use of fairly impersonal, mechanical, and hurried auditioning procedures which may work against the personal and subjective nature of the casting process.

Order No. 77-18,980, 178 pages.

CLARE TREE MAJOR: CHILDREN'S THEATRE, 1923–1954

GAMBLE, Michael Wesley, Ph.D.
New York University, 1976

Chairman: Professor Lowell S. Swortzell

Clare Tree Major (1880–1954) is credited with establishing the first nationally-known theatre for children. The purpose of this study is to investigate the work of Clare Tree Major as a playwright, director, and manager through her children's theatre during the years 1923–1954.

Primary sources for this discussion include artistic and production records in the New York Public Library's Theatre Collection at Lincoln Center and the archives of the Children's Museum of Washington, D.C. In addition, a series of interviews were held with Marion DePew Ostrander, the company costume designer for twenty-five years, as well as a number of Major's actors and scenic designers. Those interviewed include Lee Strasberg, James Coco, Velma Royton, Ralph Clanton, Herbert Voland, Robert Whitfield and other theatre professionals and educators.

In order to demonstrate the contributions made by Clare Tree Major to theatre for children in America, the study gives a background of children's theatre in the United States and a brief biography of Major including her professional training at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London and her experience as a member of the Washington Square Players. Chapter II summarizes the history of the Clare Tree Major Children's Theatre of New York. It chronicles Major's work during her early period from 1923–1928 when she produced plays for secondary school students and children at the Heckscher and Princess Theatres in New York City. During this time she turned to children's theatre exclusively while presenting Saturday morning performances at the Booth Theatre. The years of expansion, 1928–39, show her development from one to a total of six traveling children's companies on a coast-to-coast circuit each year. The later years of Major's career are examined as she continued to tour through World War II and into the 1950's.

In order to demonstrate Major's technique in children's theatre, Chapter III considers extant playscripts and evaluates four of them--Alice in Wonderland, King Midas, or the Golden Touch, Little Women, and Captive Maid of Old Carlisle--according to criteria set up in earlier dissertations by Kenneth Graham and Lowell Swortzell. Major's method of preparing plays for child audiences is investigated in Chapter IV; in this chapter her emphasis on voice and diction in direction, blocking of stage action, use of assistant directors, as well as the design of the costumes and scenery is demonstrated. Chapter V examines Major as a producer of plays for children, centering on advertising and publicity methods, touring schedules, booking techniques, and quality control of the performances. The latter is exemplified by an extended study of the 1953-54 Robin Hood touring company.

A conclusion records the contributions of Clare Tree Major and offers suggestions for further research in the field. Appendix A contains cast lists compiled by the investigator. The productions are listed chronologically by season. Appendix B gives touring schedules for the years 1936-39. The data, which includes every performance in these years and the income derived from each performance in the 1938-39 season, is presented here for the first time.

This study concludes that even though Clare Tree Major was innovative neither as a playwright nor a director, she nonetheless made significant contributions to professional theatre for children in the United States in production and management techniques. Major inaugurated coast-to-coast tours which included Toronto and other Canadian cities. She maintained a six-play schedule each season. She achieved a production style recognized as her own for its ability to hold the attention of young audiences. Major's work in children's theatre extended over three decades and brought millions of children their first contact with live professional theatre.

Order No. 77-5305, 375 pages.

A STUDY OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN IN SELECTED COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY THEATRE PROGRAMS: THEIR PERCEIVED PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

GARRETT, Michael Dean, Ph.D.
The Florida State University, 1977

Major Professor: Richard G. Fallon

A study was undertaken in order to identify some of the factors which comprise and affect the work environment of the chairman of a theatre department. It investigated the changes, problem areas, and circumstances which have affected, or were expected to affect, the operational functioning of either the administrator or his program.

Since the number of post-secondary theatre programs runs in excess of 1000, the study was limited to those chairmen whose departments offered either the Master of Fine Arts or the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Two procedures were then used to obtain the information desired. A questionnaire was sent to the chairmen of the identified departments, and interviews were arranged with certain of the administrators who had been selected for in-depth questioning.

The data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews indicates that a causal relationship probably exists between many of the factors which make up the chairman's work environment. The assumption of a chairmanship, in fact, carries with it an administrative involvement that limits the time available for dealing with one's non-administrative responsibilities. Administrative duties were found to occupy the largest part of many of the respondents' working day. Most of those contacted, in fact, reported that the supervision of the department requires at least half of their working hours. In addition, many chairmen have institutionally-related duties which combine with the departmental obligations to limit their participation in areas such as teaching and research. Previous studies have shown similar results. This study demonstrates that the chairman of a theatre department cannot escape the pressures which are inherent in the position.

The in-person interviews indicated that the growth of administrative responsibilities has not been altogether a pleasant experience. Indeed, the situation apparently offers a definite potential for discontent and low morale. While ways have been found to cope with some of the burdens of increased administrative responsibilities, more apparently needs to be done. Some possible solutions include increasing the informational and educational resources available to those chairmen who wish to improve their job skills, encouraging more qualified persons to assume departmental chairmanships, and, where necessary, increasing the auxiliary administrative staff in order that the theatre chairman might be relieved of some of the more burdensome details with which he is now being forced to contend.

Order No. 77-22,110, 154 pages.

FEASIBLE SIMULTANEOUS THEATRES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SPACE-TIME POSSIBILITIES INHERENT IN THE AUDIENCE-PERFORMER PERCEPTUAL RELATION

HELLMERS, Leonard Herbert, Jr., Ph.D.
The Florida State University, 1976

Major Professor: Theodore Clevenger, Jr.

Using the techniques of geometry, this study exhaustively explores the possible spatial configurations of live theatres. An argument is made for the necessity of certain angular and distance constraints on the visual perceptions of a performer by an audience member. These constraints are examined in all of their possible combinations; and thus are generated all of the possible configurations in which audience members and performers may feasibly be.

The discussion begins with a geometric analysis both of the perceptual ability of human audience members (their ability to see), and of the perceptual availability of performers (their ability to be seen). A paradigm case is then presented, in which idealized audience members and performers with given constraints are arranged so as to fill all of the feasibly available space. The configuration thus derived is an example of a feasible simultaneous theatre--i.e., a theatre where in any moment all of the audience is able to see all of the performance. The major argument concludes with an exhaustive enumeration of other feasible simultaneous configurations.

There follows a discussion of the effects of variations of size on the shapes of these simultaneous configurations. Non-simultaneous configurations, too, are discussed--i.e., configurations where not all of the audience sees all of the performance at the same time. The effects due to the opacity of the audience members and performers are also briefly explored--the present study thereby being related to the traditional theatre architecture concerns of sight-lines and audience seating slopes. The study concludes with an indication of possible avenues of further research.

Order No. 77-22,115, 425 pages.

EFFECTIVENESS OF CHAMBER THEATRE COMPARED TO ACTING FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF LITERATURE

HOUSE, Sandra Kay, Ed.D.
The University of Tulsa, 1977

Director: Professor Stuart R. Westerlund

The purpose of this study was to compare the responses of freshman English students to two techniques of teaching literature: dramatized acting scenes and Chamber Theatre. The study took place in eight classes of freshman English at two high schools. Twelve students from Drama II were selected at each of two high schools to present the dramatized scenes. There was a total of 188 students involved in the final experiment.

The Drama II students selected novels that had been written into plays to give selections in both Chamber and acting styles. Each student submitted questions over their selection for the test. A trial performance was then given for the sophomore classes that met during the Drama II class period. Both acting and Chamber Theatre versions for each selection were given for the trial test.

After the test had been administered and scored, the effectiveness of the items were evaluated through an item analysis.

The test had to be limited, so the fifteen multiple choice questions which discriminated best were selected. Only members of the freshman English classes whose classes coincided with Drama II viewed the presentations. Four freshman classes at North High School and South High School observed a Chamber Theatre presentation and a dramatized scene presentation from different selections of literature. After each performance, a multiple choice test was administered immediately to determine which performance provided the student with the greatest understanding of literature. The two forms were compared between the classes at each school who saw the same actors, so that the acting ability would not affect the scores.

Cuttings from the novel and selections from the play were from the same section in the literature. The tests over the Chamber and play forms were given to a class of students in the students' classroom on the same day, during the same class period.

In order to find the difference in teaching literature through Chamber Theatre and acting, the following question was asked: Does having a narrator as used in Chamber Theatre help the student understand and experience a piece of literature better than when viewing the same piece as presented in an acting scene with no narration? This question was stated in the following null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between dramatizations which utilize the narration and more traditional dramatizations which exclude the narration in projecting interpretations of prose literature to students.

A one way analysis of variance at the .05 level of significance was used to test the null hypothesis that there was no difference in means.

The combined Chamber scores and the combined play scores for all productions placed Chamber Theatre with the highest mean of 10.11 as compared to the plays' mean of 9.01. The calculated F ratio of 16.4 was well outside the 3.8 which is critical at the .05 level.

On the basis of the results of this study, Chamber Theatre appears to be an excellent way to teach literature to students. It was also noted from the results that some types of literature are more successful in the Chamber form than others. The more abstract pieces of literature that have complicated characters, rapid change of locale, time that speeds up, or time that slows down, are better understood through Chamber Theatre. At the .05 level of significance there was a significant difference in favor of Chamber Theatre for more difficult selections in literature.

Chamber Theatre makes it possible for the original narrative to remain intact with no changes needed for the dramatic presentation. Teachers found that they could use any piece of literature in their classrooms without having to limit acting in the future strictly to dramatized play scenes given only in dialogue form. Order No. 77-18,740, 101 pages.

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PERFORMER ATTITUDES, INVOLVEMENT WITH PERSONAE, AND THE PERFORMANCE OF LITERATURE

KEENER, Cecelia Duncan, Ph.D.
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1977

Major Professor: Marion L. Kleinau

Attitudes are an important part of the oral interpreter's encounter with the literature he performs. Determination of persona attitude is basic to an understanding of and involvement with the persona of a piece of literature. Since the oral interpretation process involves a relationship between performer and persona, insight into how attitudes affect an interpreter's involvement with the personae of the literature he performs and how the performance of the literature affects the interpreter's attitudes seems worthy of the attention of interpretation scholars.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships among performer attitudes, involvement with personae, and the performance of literature.

The literature relative to attitude change and involvement of the performer with literature which embodies a strong attitudinal position was drawn primarily from research in speech, social psychology, and theatre. The construct which recurred most often was that of role playing. Experiments conducted to test the effects of role playing on attitudes were surveyed, attitude change theories were reviewed, and the dynamics of close involvement with a role was examined.

Eighty-eight students enrolled in the beginning oral interpretation course at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale served as subjects. One group served as performers of literature embodying a strong attitudinal position, one group served as observers of the performance, and one group served as controls.

The script performed was composed of poems which express anti-hunting sentiment. The persona in each poem expresses disapproval of hunting.

In order to determine subjects' attitudes toward hunting, a twelve item Likert-type attitude instrument and a twenty-eight item semantic differential were used as the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest. A content analysis of responses to questions, recorded by performers in journals, served as a measure of the performers' involvement with the personae in the poems.

One group of students, the performers, took a pretest measuring their attitudes toward hunting. Then they rehearsed and performed a program of poetry in which the personae of the poems held a negative attitude toward hunting. Throughout the rehearsal and performance period, they kept journals in which they recorded responses to questions which indicated their involvement with the personae of the poems. They took the posttest following performance and six weeks later took the delayed posttest.

Another group, the observers, took the pretest, wrote an analysis of the poems in the script to insure extensive exposure to the literature, watched the performance of the poems, and took the posttest and delayed posttest.

The third group, the control group, took only the pretest, posttest and delayed posttest.

Hypothesis one: There will be a significant change in attitudes toward hunting in performers of literature which expresses anti-hunting attitudes. A one-way analysis of variance was used to test this hypothesis. The independent variable was assignment to a task in an oral interpretation class. This variable was varied three ways: treatment one--performer, treatment two--observer, and treatment three--control. The hypothesis was generally supported.

Hypothesis two: There will be a significant relationship between the depth of persona involvement assumed by a performer of literature expressing anti-hunting attitudes and his attitudes related to hunting. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to determine the relationships between the depth of persona involvement and the performers' attitudes toward hunting. The hypothesis was not supported.

The implications of this study demand that teachers and directors of oral interpretation become aware of the possible consequences of the oral interpreter's experience with the literature he performs. Order No. 77-24,467, 138 pages.

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF SEX AS A FACTOR INFLUENCING AUDIENCE EVALUATION OF PERFORMER EFFECTIVENESS AND AUDIENCE COMPREHENSION OF PERFORMANCE FOR SELECTED DRAMATIC MONOLOGUES

KWAL, Teri Susan, Ph.D.
New York University, 1976

Chairman: Professor Jean W. White

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the sex of an oral interpreter, and the sex of the dramatic character portrayed compounded to affect audience evaluation of performer effectiveness and audience comprehension of the performance.

The following six hypotheses were postulated: 1. There will be no significant main effect for sex of interpreter on subject ratings of performer effectiveness. 2. There will be no significant main effect for sex of dramatic character being interpreted on subject ratings of performer effectiveness. 3. There will be no significant interaction effect between sex of interpreter and sex of dramatic character on subject ratings of performer effectiveness. 4. There will be no significant main effect for sex of interpreter on audience comprehension of the passages. 5. There will be no significant main effect for sex of dramatic character being interpreted on audience comprehension of the passages. 6. There will be no significant interaction effect between sex of interpreter and sex of dramatic character on audience comprehension of the passages.

A pilot test for the purpose of selecting dramatic monologues to be used in the study provided the researcher with six equally readable monologues, of which three were clearly masculine in nature and three were clearly feminine in nature.

The subjects were 275 undergraduates enrolled in twelve sections of Communication Arts and Sciences I (C.A.S. I) at Queens College. Two extremely competent interpreters, one male and one female, were chosen from a pool of six readers on the basis of an interpreter selection test administered to a panel of five interpretation instructors. Each of the chosen interpreters was videotaped while performing the six selected monologues. In all, twelve videotapes were made.

The twelve randomly selected C.A.S. I sections were randomly assigned to view one of the twelve videotaped performances. The data were collected in a manner consistent with the purposes of the study. The Reader Evaluation Form developed by Roland was used to assess perceived effectiveness. A cloze procedure form was used to assess audience comprehension of performance. A 2x2 factorial design for effectiveness and comprehension was used to test the stated hypotheses. The statistical method of analysis of variance was used to analyze the data.

The results of the study demonstrated that there were no significant main effects for either sex of interpreter, or for sex of dramatic character being interpreted on audience ratings of performer effectiveness. However, hypothesis three, which predicted that there would be no significant interaction effect between sex of interpreter and sex of dramatic character on subject ratings of performer effectiveness, was rejected at the .05 level of significance. The female interpreter was judged to perform female roles significantly better than the male interpreter was judged to perform female roles, but the male interpreter was not judged to perform male roles significantly better than the female interpreter was judged to perform male roles.

The results of the study also indicated that there was no significant main effect for sex of interpreter on audience comprehension of the dramatic passages, and that there was no significant interaction effect between sex of interpreter and sex of dramatic character on audience comprehension of the dramatic passages. However, hypothesis five which predicted that there would be no significant main effect for sex of dramatic character being interpreted on audience comprehension of the dramatic passages was rejected at the .001 level of significance. The female character's passages were better comprehended by the audience regardless of whether the passage was performed by a male or by a female interpreter.

Order No. 77-5317, 145 pages.

ENVIRONMENTS FOR ORAL INTERPRETATION: THE DESIGN AND USE OF SPACE FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF LITERATURE

LOXLEY, Robert Brian, Ph.D.
Southern Illinois University, 1977

Major Professor: Dr. Marion L. Kleinau

The study explores the relationship of oral interpretation to its environment, or physical setting, and focuses more specifically on the design and use of space for the interpretation event. The primary thrust of the study is an attempt to develop alternatives to the more conventional environments of the classroom and theatre. The study attempts to answer the following questions: (1) What is the relationship between oral interpretation and its traditional setting? (2) What should be the role of the physical setting in the interpretation experience? (3) What is the process of evolving environmental forms and spatial designs for interpretation? and (4) What are possible alternatives to the conventional setting, and how might they be used? Two of the major concepts developed in the study are: (1) since the environment and behavior influence each other through a process of reciprocal interaction, any consideration of the environment and space needs to be equally concerned with what happens within the environment--or the behavioral system of the event; and (2) since the present environment and use of space have influenced--and have become a part of--the very definition of the interpretation event, the event itself needs to be redefined, or reassessed, before a new environment is evolved for it. Because so little has been written about the interpretation environment--and because no environment has been designed specifically for interpretation--the study draws upon ideas and concepts in other areas of study, such as environmental psychology, the design fields, other art forms, and recent developments in aesthetics.

Chapter one reviews the writings of interpretation theorists on the environment and use of space and concludes that very little consideration has been given to the environment and, further, that the conventional environment and spatial arrangement of the classroom and theatre appear to be implicitly--and uncritically--accepted by a majority of interpreters as the predominant environmental model for interpretation. Although a number of more recent writers have indicated a desire to explore alternative spatial arrangements and environments, no clear method or direction has emerged in the search for alternatives.

Chapter two examines current concepts and theories of the man-environment relationship and the design of the environment. It explores the reasons why little attention has been given to the effects of the environment on man's behavior and discusses emerging views of the man-environment relationship. It then presents a view of the design process in which environmental "form" is evolved from an analysis of the design "context," which is a system of requisite behaviors which are necessary to realize the specific values and needs of those who will use the environment. The chapter also describes a "humanistic" orientation to the design process and the characteristics of the forms which are emerging from this approach.

Chapter three integrates the theories of the environment and design with oral interpretation and defines the interpretation event as a "context" for environmental form. A theory of design is developed for interpretation in which the environment is seen to evolve from a consideration of the literature, the performance, the integration of the audience into the performance, and the event as a social occasion--all of which themselves need to be "designed" before considering the environment which is required to support them.

Chapter four establishes the requirements for environmental form and suggests alternative possibilities for providing environmental support for the interpretation event. It considers the demands which are placed upon the performance space by the literature, the interpreter, and the audience and the extra-performance concerns which also make demands on the design of the environment. Lastly, the chapter considers nontraditional uses of the conventional environment, the design of original interpretation environments, and the use of "found" spaces in the extended environment.

The Conclusion suggests that a greater recognition of the environment and the use of space as significant and integral parts of the interpretation event would be of some benefit to oral interpreters and also that in exploring alternatives interpreters should free themselves more completely from the constraints of the traditional environments and uses of space. It recommends that the concepts presented in the study be explored further in practice and points to a number of specific issues which need further study in this area.

Order No. 77-16,654, 477 pages.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE STATUS OF THEATRE ARTS AS TAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF NEW JERSEY

MURPHY, James Ronald, Ed.D.
Columbia University Teachers College, 1977

Sponsor: Professor Steven Epstein

This study investigated the nature and scope of the teaching of theatre arts in New Jersey's public secondary schools. In an attempt to describe the prevailing practices and conditions for the 1974-1975 academic year, a questionnaire was prepared and mailed to every secondary school in the state. The questionnaire was designed to determine both the quality and quantity of the state's theatre arts programs. The instrument was sent either directly to the principal in each school or indirectly to each principal in his district by the County Superintendent's Office. Of the 467 questionnaires sent to the principals 277 or 59.31 percent were returned.

A profile of the typical theatre arts program in the public secondary schools of New Jersey was drawn from the data. The profile generalizes about instructional programs, facilities, play production activities, and theatre teacher training and background. In addition, this investigation sought to determine the relationship between the size of a school and its location and other selected data. Crosstabulations between size and location and the response to other items on the questionnaire were analyzed.

The analysis of the data indicates that the majority (51 percent) of New Jersey's public secondary schools offer at least one basic introductory course in theatre arts, that only one theatre arts faculty member is employed in 88 percent of the schools, and that most of these teachers (56 percent) do not hold the proper certificate given by the state of New Jersey. The larger schools (over 1,500 students) of the state usually have developed theatre arts programs more fully. Schools located in the Urban areas of the state have substantially weaker programs in theatre arts than those in other areas of the state under investigation (Inner City, Suburban, Rural).

The study concludes with an analysis of implications for further study in the field as well as for future research procedure. It presents recommendations for developing full programs in theatre in each of the public secondary schools of the state. It also recommends the training and hiring of properly certified faculty to carry on such programs.

Order No. 77-22,277, 96 pages.

STANISLAVSKI: HIS ACTING PRINCIPLES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE FIELD OF ORAL INTERPRETATION

NEIMAN, Jack, Ph.D.
University of California, Los Angeles, 1977

Chairman: Professor Donald E. Hargis

This is a descriptive-theoretical dissertation in the area of oral interpretation of literature. The primary objective is to present a description of the acting fundamentals of Constantin Stanislavski, with the specific purpose of determining their significance for the oral interpreter. Can the application of these acting principles lead to a more meaningful oral presentation of literature? The author hypothesizes that they can.

A considerable amount of material has been published relating to all aspects of acting. Somewhat less material has been published relating to the highly specific field of oral interpretation of literature; however, there have been few attempts to glean information from one of these disciplines to broaden the scope of the other. In fact, the cross-transference of the procedures from one of these disciplines to the other has sometimes been labeled as professional encroachment. During the course of his research, the author was unable to uncover any published effort attempting to apply the Stanislavski "method" to oral interpretation. Articles which deal with Stanislavski in the Quarterly Journal of Speech (e.g., Schnitzler [April 1954], and Hewitt and d'Angelo [June 1932]) attempt to clarify misinterpretations of the Stanislavski system, but do so strictly within the confines of acting.

The dissertation first concerns itself with the general field of oral interpretation of literature. It defines that art and describes its nature, as well as explains how oral interpretation fits into the total field of communication. Next, through careful and detailed examination of Stanislavski's acting principles, the dissertation emphasizes that Stanislavski regarded his method as a means by which a state of inspiration and creativity could be induced. His system is dedicated to honesty of performance. Stanislavski's notions of analysis of script, internal creative technique, and external creative technique, suggest that an actor "live" his role and, therefore, act-in and not act-out his part. Additionally, this dissertation adapts Stanislavski's insights, thereby generating a new system of creative interpretation.

The author employs a student-teacher model to explain how the Stanislavski system may be converted specifically to the oral interpretation of literature. It is suggested that such a method of grappling with meaning, creativity, and presentation will maximize the ethical effect of oral presentation.

> You must not duplicate . . . you must create something of your own.
>
> --Stanislavski

Order No. 77-17,233, 124 pages.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CREATIVE MOVEMENT AS A MEANS OF INCREASING POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT, PERSONAL, AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF SELECTED SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS

OSHUNS, Margaret Gwen, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1977

Adviser: Professor Donald R. Bateman

The purpose of this exploratory study was to determine whether creative movement would increase self-concept in a select group of seventh grade students. Two classes of seventh grade parochial school students were chosen from two different kindergarten through high grade schools located on the west-side of Columbus, Ohio.

One class was chosen as the treatment group, the other as the control group based on the researcher's familiarity with the treatment group's staff and plant facilities. At the beginning of the study there were twenty subjects in the control group. At the completion of the study there were twenty subjects in the control group and nineteen in the treatment group -- one child dropped out.

The treatment was three school weeks in duration. On the first (Day I) and last (Day XV) day of the treatment, the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and The California Test of Personality were administered to both the treatment and control groups. The control group spent Day 2-14 engaged in their usual classroom activities. The Treatment group, however spent Days 2-14 actively participating in daily workshops exploring the critical elements of creative movement.

The treatment consisted of daily hour and a half sessions where the children discovered new ways to move their bodies and new ways to move through space. The children were guided in their explorations by the researcher who helped them work as individuals and in groups for forty-five minutes to an hour. The remaining half hour was spent recording their thoughts, feelings, and answers to questions of the day's activities that were provided by the researcher. Some of the areas explored were time, space, rhythm, levels, weight, force, flow, and creative dramatics.

The quantitative extent of the students' participation was recorded by observers who occasionally served as demonstrators of difficult movement concepts. The content of the treatment was primarily based on the movement techniques of Barbara Mettler and the creative dramatics techniques of Viola Spolin and the researcher.

Various analyses of variance were employed to determine the comparableness of the two groups, to determine the significance of sex in the results, and to determine whether creative movement increased self-concept as operationally defined by the Piers-Harris or life adjustment as operationally defined by the California Test of Personality.

The results of the two objective personality tests revealed that creative movement seemed to reduce anxiety as operationally defined by the Piers-Harris, and increase positive school relations with the students, peers, teachers, and other adults as operationally defined by the California Test of Personality. Interestingly, the objective test data was supported by the subjective data compiled by the researcher which consisted of the students' self-reports (their daily journals), the researcher's personal log, and reports from the students' homeroom teacher, other classroom teachers, and the principal.

Recommendations that were drawn from the study included a need to expand the size and scope of the study to include public school children who would participate in creative movement activities weekly for at least a school year. Other recommendations included the need to find alternative methods for evaluating creative movement activities. Some of these were Effort/Shape, variations on George Kelly's work, and the responsive evaluation techniques of Robert Stake and Gordon Dahl.

Order No. 77-17,121, 191 pages.

A COMPARATIVE HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPROVISATION IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN THE UNITED STATES AND IN THE UNITED KINGDOM FROM 1910-1975

SARASON, Kerin R., Ph.D.
The University of Connecticut, 1976

Improvisation or creative dramatics, defined as a dramatic activity in which the performers act as they create their lines spontaneously, was distinguished from formal drama which is based on a script and is performed for an audience other than the actors. Authorities on the teaching of English in both England and the United States have recommended improvisation as an effective method of achieving cognitive as well as affective goals. This study examines the informal drama movement in these two countries so as to provide a comparative history for the period 1910-1975.

Pivotal writers on improvisation in England and in the United States during the period from 1910-1975 were identified, their goals and practices analyzed, and comparisons and contrasts between the two groups noted.

Where similarities were found the question was asked as to whether writers of one country influenced the other. Where there were differences, three questions were raised to attempt to account for those differences. Were they the result of varying economic and political conditions in the respective countries? Were they to be explained by the difference in educational establishments in these countries? Were they an outcome of educational philosophies held by the pivotal writers?

Many similarities were found, but there was no evidence that the pivotal writers on improvisation in the two countries had a direct influence on each other. Study of the responses to economic and political conditions by these writers failed to account for differences between the two groups, nor did their educational philosophies and the educational establishments in their respective countries explain varying points of view. Differences appeared to be a matter of individual choices.

The first writers on creative dramatics in the United States acknowledged their affinity with the Progressive Education movement and many of their goals were identical with the goals of that movement. The aims of the English improvisationists were found to have had their origins in developmental philosophies of the previous century. But American writers also acknowledged their debt to these traditions, and a partial explanation for likenesses between the two groups became apparent.

When creative dramatics came to the fore at the Anglo-American Conference at Dartmouth in 1966, there had been considerable literature on the subject ever since 1911. What had been the role of official and non-official agencies in England and America during that interim in advancing the cause of that movement? It was found that the English Ministry of Education had played a more positive part in calling dramatics methods in the teaching of English to teachers in that field than its counterpart in the United States, the U.S. Office of Education. That agency took an active role in the 1960s; the English Ministry had lent its support thirty years earlier. Professional organizations in each of the countries have supported the improvisation movement, but that support is most evident since the Dartmouth Seminar. No English pivotal writer attended the Seminar, but the one American who did was influenced by it and, in turn, influenced the English educators who were there.

Improvisation has been given a broader definition since 1911 when it signified merely the production of an unscripted play by students, performing only for themselves, and using original dialogue. It has come to mean spontaneous activities of all sorts likely to occur in the English classroom, and improvisational techniques have been recommended to develop an English activities program. As the emphasis on the polished play has ceased, improvisation has come to be regarded as a learning tool in the teaching of English.

Order No. 77-4295, 292 pages.

A COMPARISON OF TWO INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS FOR TEACHING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS OF ORAL INTERPRETATION

SMITH, Arthur Yates, Ed.D.
Brigham Young University, 1977

Chairman: Clark D. Webb

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant difference in achievement, attitudes and skills-in-performance between students who were engaged in an individualized mirror methodology and students who were engaged in a traditional instructional methodology in oral interpretation. Analyses of covariance were conducted for the pretest-posttest gains on achievement, attitudes, and skill-in-performance. Correlations between these variables were also measured.

No significant differences were found on the analyses between experimental and control groups. However, a significant difference was found between achievement posttest and skills-in-performance pretest. A correlation was found between the dependent variables of achievement-skills and attitude-skills. The conclusions of the study indicate that neither approach is any more successful than the other in the teaching of students in oral interpretation. Order No. 77-17,627, 100 pages.

ALBERT MCCLEERY'S TRANSFER OF THEATRE PRACTICE TO LIVE TELEVISION DRAMA

THIEL, Joan Elizabeth, Ph.D.
The University of Michigan, 1977

Chairman: Edward Stasheff

This dissertation is a historical-descriptive study of early career experiences which influenced Albert McCleery as well as the contributions he made to the development of "live" drama on television. The information was secured from a wide variety of sources: the private papers of his associates, interviews with people who worked with him, the kinescopes of four programs produced and directed by him, NBC publicity releases, the files of the NBC Program Analysis Department, reviews in the contemporary press and his own writings and transcripts of his speeches.

McCleery was a pioneer in the arena theatre movement as well as in television drama. Through his theatre experiences during the thirties he learned certain theatrical principles that he would ultimately transfer to the drama of television. His early mentors were Gilmor Brown, Grant Wood and Margo Jones.

During these early years, McCleery developed the strong conviction that the face of the actor was the single most important aspect of the theatre. He believed, with great urgency, that the audience wanted "to see and hear" what they were witnessing. So he built his arena theatre small and he got his audience close to the actor. Television was the perfect instrument in his endeavors to see "what the actor is thinking." He brought his camera tight in on the actor's face to the point that it filled the screen completely. He called this technique the "cameo shot."

With the cameo shot, he needed a viable staging method that would give the camera the greatest access to the actor. "Cameo staging," with the cameras "clustered" in the midst of a group of actors, provided this accessibility. It also required McCleery to surround his actors with a purple-black background against which he could frame their features, comparable to the features on a cameo brooch. "Cameo style" means camera close-ups, stripped down, low key lighting and stylized sets for the purpose of bringing the characters and action of the drama into sharp focus and, ultimately, to heighten the dramatic impact on the viewer.

McCleery's name is irrevocably linked with three significant series in television history: Cameo Theatre, Hallmark Hall of Fame and Matinee Theatre. Under Hallmark's sponsorship, McCleery was able to make his next contribution to television, the presentation of quality drama. With Hallmark he produced and directed Hamlet (1953) in television's first two-hour drama.

From his Army career he brought to television an organization and method of operation that sustained and maintained 666 one-hour dramas over a period of three years under the series title of Matinee Theatre.

His sense of theatrical showmanship also found expression in the elements of spectacle (attention-getting devices) of some of his television dramas.

McCleery's contributions to television drama were in four areas: cameo and its pictorial concept, the script, organization and spectacle. Order No. 77-18,134, 410 pages.

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